

## **Historic, Archive Document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



H280.39  
M343  
cop. 2

HOUSEHOLD PURCHASES  
OF  
BUTTER, CHEESE, NONFAT DRY MILK SOLIDS, AND MARGARINE,  
MAY 1954



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Agricultural Marketing Service  
July 1954

## PREFACE

This report, covering May 1954, is the second in a series of monthly reports showing estimates of current household purchases of butter, cheese, nonfat dry milk solids, and margarine. This series, and other reports described below, will be based on information obtained in a cooperative project financed by the dairy industry and the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The Department funds are provided under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (RMA, Title II).

The basic data presented herein were collected and tabulated from the National Consumer Panel of the Market Research Corporation of America under contract with the Department. These data represent expansions to national totals from a representative nationwide sample of approximately 5,800 families. The basic reporting unit in this sample is the weekly diary kept by each member on the panel reporting, in detail, volumes purchased and related information on food and drug products. The monthly estimates represent purchases during a 4-week period, 28 days, for purposes of month-to-month comparison.

The estimates include only purchases for consumption by household consumers and in no way reflect volume purchased for or through outlets such as hotels, restaurants, hospitals, or other institutions.

Under terms of the contract, this series of monthly reports will be supplemented by quarterly reports showing data on the same items of food for the United States and by regions and by type of retail sales outlet. The quarterly reports will contain information covering a 13-week period, whereas the three individual monthly reports for each quarter cover only a 12-week period.

A report will also be released covering a 6-month period and relating household purchases of the specified dairy products and margarine to family characteristics. The data breakdowns for the report based on family characteristics will be by region, size of community, income, occupation, age of housewife, and size of household.

This report was prepared in the Market Development Branch, Marketing Research Division, Agricultural Marketing Service.

HOUSEHOLD PURCHASES OF BUTTER, CHEESE, NONFAT DRY  
MILK SOLIDS, AND MARGARINE, MAY 1954

The data in this report are estimates of total purchases by household consumers only, and do not include consumption in restaurants, hotels, hospitals, or other institutional outlets. Data for a single month are for a 4-week period (28 days) in order to permit comparisons of purchase volume between periods of equal length.

SUMMARY

Household purchases of butter were estimated at 58.5 million pounds in May, up about half a million pounds from the preceding month, and almost 8 percent larger than for the average 28-day period in the months November 1953-January 1954. May--like April--was a month in which consumption of butter increased in American households after a decrease in retail prices of butter that followed the lowering of price supports on dairy products, effective April 1, 1954. Householders reported paying 66 cents per pound for butter in May, down slightly from April, but 10 cents per pound below the November 1953-January 1954 average price.

Total cheese purchases by household consumers, purchased weight basis, including natural and processed cheese, cheese foods and cheese spreads, were estimated at 51.3 million pounds in May, compared with an estimated 50.3 million pounds in April. Average prices reported paid by householders for the various types of cheese were generally lower in May than a month earlier. Also reported were purchases of 36 million pounds of cottage cheese in May, reflecting a slight decrease from April. Cottage cheese prices were reported at 21.2 cents per 12-ounce unit in May, unchanged from the average price in April.

Purchases of nonfat dry milk solids for household use totaled 10.9 million pounds in May, just below the level reported for April. The average price paid for this product by householders was reported fractionally lower in May than a month earlier.

Household purchases of margarine were estimated at a little over 87 million pounds in May, almost 1 million pounds larger than in April but about 2 percent below the 28-day average for the period November 1953-January 1954. Average of prices reported paid for margarine was practically the same, ranging between 26.2 cents and 26.5 cents per pound, in the three periods for which data are available.



## BUTTER

Purchases of butter by household consumers in May 1954 were estimated at 58.5 million pounds, about one-half million pounds more than for the preceding 28-day period. May purchases were almost 8 percent greater than the 28-day average for November 1953-January 1954, the latest months for which data are available when purchases were not influenced by lower prices or by news reports of expected lowering of butter prices. These estimates do not include purchases in hotels, restaurants, hospitals, or other institutional outlets. Data are not available as to normal seasonal change in household purchases.

May--like April--was a month in which consumption of butter increased in United States households after a decrease in retail prices of butter due to the reduction in price supports on butter and other dairy products, effective April 1, 1954. Average prices paid by consumers were reported at 66.0 cents per pound in May, six-tenths of a cent per pound less than in April. Compared with the average price paid by householders in the November 1953-January 1954 period, May prices were 10 cents per pound lower, or down about 13 percent.

Almost 45 percent of all families reported buying butter in May, about the same percentage as a month earlier. Of those families buying butter, the average size of purchase and the average number of purchases in May were up slightly over those in April (table 1).

Preliminary figures on disappearance of butter during May were not available at the time this report was prepared. It is hoped to give in succeeding reports an estimate of household consumption of butter as a percentage of total disappearance in civilian channels, as was done in the April report.

## CHEESE

Householders bought an estimated total of 51.3 million pounds of cheese, purchased-weight basis, in May 1954, about 1 million pounds more than the 4-week period in April 1954. This estimate includes reported purchases of natural and processed cheese. Cottage cheese is excluded from this total.

Natural cheese purchases were estimated at 25.3 million pounds during May. This total reflects an increase of half a million pounds over April purchases. Swiss cheese purchases in May were down from a month earlier whereas American, cream, and other varieties were somewhat higher (table 4). American cheese purchases made up the biggest part of the natural cheese total--about 60 percent in both April and May.

In May, purchases of processed cheese, including cheese foods and cheese spreads, by householders were estimated at 26.0 million pounds, about half a million pounds more than in April. All of the increase in this category was due to increased purchases of cheese spreads during May, the reported household consumption of other processed cheese being down slightly from a month earlier (table 5).

Average prices reported paid for most types of natural and processed cheese were down slightly in May as compared with April. The average price paid per pound for natural American cheese in May was 63.0 cents per pound, about 2.5 cents per pound more than the average price for processed cheese, excluding cheese foods and spreads.

Slightly more than 60 percent of all families reported buying some type of natural or processed cheese in May. This figure was about the same as in the 28-day period during April. The estimated percentage of all families buying each type will be shown in the forthcoming quarterly reports for the United States.

Cottage cheese purchases in May by household consumers totaled 36.0 million pounds as compared with an estimated 37.4 million pounds in April. Reported size of average purchase at 15.8 ounces and average price per 12-ounce unit of 21.2 cents were the same in both months. The data on cottage cheese prices have been screened to avoid any upward bias in reporting due to various tie-in sales used to increase sales of this item.

#### NONFAT DRY MILK SOLIDS

Householders purchased an estimated total of 10.9 million pounds of nonfat dry milk solids in May--a quantity down slightly from the level of purchases in April (table 7).

Prices paid for nonfat dry milk solids averaged 37.8 cents per pound in May compared with 38.1 cents per pound during April. These prices were based on all household purchases. Prices paid for 1-pound packages only also declined, from 36.7 cents in April to 36.1 cents per pound in May.

The average size of purchase, by families buying nonfat dry milk solids, was reported at 21.1 ounces in both April and May.

As the time between purchases of nonfat dry milk solids for many households may be longer than a month, information as to percentage of families buying will be presented quarterly so as to base the estimate on a larger number of families.

#### MARGARINE

Household purchases of margarine, carried in this report for purposes of comparison with butter, totaled an estimated 87.1 million pounds in May 1954, almost a million pounds more than in the preceding month. Although purchases of margarine were larger in May than in April, they were still about 2 percent smaller than those reported in the average 28-day period during November 1953-January 1954.

Average prices paid by consumers for margarine in May were reported at 26.4 cents per pound. This figure compares with reported prices of 26.2 cents per pound in April and the 26.5 cents per pound average during the months of November 1953-January 1954.



As in April, householders buying margarine averaged fewer purchases in May than did families buying butter, but they bought almost 1.5 pounds per purchase as against a 1.1-pound average for householders buying butter.

About 56 percent of all families purchased margarine in May as against 43 percent of all families buying butter. This was about the relationship that prevailed in the preceding month. Almost 18 percent of all families reported buying both butter and margarine during the 28-day period in May.



Table 1.--Butter: Household purchases and average price per pound,  
U. S., 4-week periods

| Year<br>and<br>month | Percentage of<br>all families<br>buying | Purchases         |                     |                           |                         | Average price<br>paid<br>per pound |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
|                      |   | Per buying family | Average<br>quantity | Quantity                  | Per 1,000<br>population |                                    |
|                      | <u>Percent</u>                          | <u>Number</u>     | <u>Pounds</u>       | <u>Million<br/>pounds</u> | <u>Pounds</u>           | <u>Cents</u>                       |
| 1954                 |   |                   |                     |                           |                         |                                    |
| April                | 44.0                                    | 2.74              | 1.09                | 58.0                      | 367                     | 66.6                               |
| May                  | 42.8                                    | 2.80              | 1.10                | 58.5                      | 371                     | 66.0                               |
| June                 |   |                   |                     |                           |                         |                                    |

Source: National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 2.--Margarine: Household purchases and average price per pound,  
U. S., 4-week periods

| Year<br>and<br>month | Percentage of<br>all families<br>buying | Purchases         |                     |                           |                         | Average price<br>paid<br>per pound |
|----------------------|---|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
|                      |   | Per buying family | Average<br>quantity | Quantity                  | Per 1,000<br>population |                                    |
|                      | <u>Percent</u>                          | <u>Number</u>     | <u>Pounds</u>       | <u>Million<br/>pounds</u> | <u>Pounds</u>           | <u>Cents</u>                       |
| 1954                 |   |                   |                     |                           |                         |                                    |
| April                | 56.4                                    | 2.38              | 1.45                | 86.3                      | 546                     | 26.2                               |
| May                  | 56.4                                    | 2.39              | 1.44                | 87.1                      | 551                     | 26.4                               |
| June                 |   |                   |                     |                           |                         |                                    |

Source: National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 3.--Cheese: Household purchases and average price per unit,  
U. S., 4-week period, May 1954

| Type           | Percentage of<br>all families<br>buying any type | Quantity purchased         |              |                         | Average price<br>paid<br>per unit |       |
|----------------|--|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|
|                |  | Average<br>per<br>purchase | Total        | Per 1,000<br>population |                                   |       |
|                | Percent  | Ounces                     | 1,000 pounds | Pounds                  | Unit                              | Cents |
| Natural        |  |                            |              |                         |                                   |       |
| American       | x  | 13.4                       | 15,310       | 96.9                    | Lb.                               | 63.0  |
| Swiss          | x  | 9.5                        | 2,950        | 18.7                    | Lb.                               | 76.8  |
| Cream          | x  | 5.6                        | 3,460        | 21.9                    | 3 oz.                             | 14.3  |
| Other          | x  | 9.2                        | 3,590        | 22.7                    | Lb.                               | 77.4  |
| Processed      |  |                            |              |                         |                                   |       |
| Cheese         | x  | 10.7                       | 10,670       | 67.6                    | Lb.                               | 60.6  |
| Cheese food    | x  | 22.7                       | 9,020        | 57.1                    | Lb.                               | 45.8  |
| Cheese spread  | x  | 12.9                       | 6,290        | 39.8                    | Lb.                               | 52.0  |
|                | <u>1/60.4</u>                                    |                            |              |                         |                                   |       |
| Cottage cheese | --   | 15.8                       | 36,020       | 228.0                   | 12 oz.                            | 21.2  |

1/Estimated percentage buying each type will be supplied in quarterly report.

Source: National Consumer Panel of Research Corporation of America.

Table 4.--Natural Cheese: Household purchases and average price,  
U. S., 4-week periods

| Year<br>and<br>month | Purchases       |                 |                 |                 | Average price paid |       |           |       |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------|-----------|-------|
|                      | American        | Swiss           | Cream           | Other           | Per pound          |       | Per 3 oz. |       |
|                      |                 |                 |                 |                 | American           | Swiss | Other     | Cream |
|                      | 1,000<br>pounds | 1,000<br>pounds | 1,000<br>pounds | 1,000<br>pounds | Cents              | Cents | Cents     | Cents |
| 1954                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                    |       |           |       |
| April                | 14,910          | 3,180           | 3,390           | 3,320           | 63.6               | 78.0  | 75.5      | 14.1  |
| May                  | 15,310          | 2,950           | 3,460           | 3,590           | 63.0               | 76.8  | 77.4      | 14.3  |
| June                 |                 |                 |                 |                 |                    |       |           |       |

Source: National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 5.--Processed Cheese: Household purchases and average price,  
U. S., 4-week periods

| Year<br>and<br>month | Purchases           |                 |                   | Average price paid per pound |                 |                   |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
|                      | Processed<br>cheese | Cheese<br>foods | Cheese<br>spreads | Processed<br>cheese          | Cheese<br>foods | Cheese<br>spreads |
|                      |                     |                 |                   |                              |                 |                   |
|                      | 1,000<br>pounds     | 1,000<br>pounds | 1,000<br>pounds   | Cents                        | Cents           | Cents             |
| 1954                 |                     |                 |                   |                              |                 |                   |
| April                | 10,740              | 9,110           | 5,670             | 60.9                         | 47.1            | 57.9              |
| May                  | 10,670              | 9,020           | 6,290             | 60.6                         | 45.8            | 52.0              |
| June                 |                     |                 |                   |                              |                 |                   |

Source: National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 6.--Cottage Cheese: Household purchases and average price,  
U. S., 4-week periods

| Year<br>and<br>month | Purchases               | Average price paid                   |                                     |
|----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                      |                         | Per 12 oz. unit for<br>all purchases | Per actual 12 oz. unit<br>purchases |
|                      | <u>1,000<br/>pounds</u> | <u>Cents</u>                         | <u>Cents</u>                        |
| 1954                 |                         |                                      |                                     |
| April                | 37,370                  | 21.2                                 | 22.7                                |
| May                  | 36,020                  | 21.2                                 | 22.5                                |
| June                 |                         |                                      |                                     |

Source: National Consumer Panel of Research Corporation of America.

Table 7.--Nonfat dry milk solids: Household purchases and average  
price per pound, U. S., 4-week periods

| Year<br>and<br>month | Quantity purchased         |                     |                         | Average price paid             |   |
|----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
|                      | Average<br>per<br>purchase | Total               | Per 1,000<br>population | Per pound for<br>all purchases | Per actual<br>1-pound unit<br>purchases |
|                      | <u>Ounces</u>              | <u>1,000 pounds</u> | <u>Pounds</u>           | <u>Cents</u>                   | <u>Cents</u>                            |
| 1954                 |                            |                     |                         |                                |   |
| April                | 21.1                       | 11,080              | 70.2                    | 38.1                           | 36.7                                    |
| May                  | 21.1                       | 10,880              | 68.9                    | 37.8                           | 36.1                                    |
| June                 |                            |                     |                         |                                |   |

Source: National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.